

# Gallatin RAC Meeting Notes

## October 13, 2016

### In Attendance

#### CATEGORY A

Kerry White  
J. Bruce Reirson  
Jeremy Fatouros(by phone)  
Esther Fishbaugh (non-voting, replacement member)

#### CATEGORY B

David Cary  
Dennis Phillippi– **CHAIR**  
Jim Kraus

#### CATEGORY C

Amy Schaff  
John McKenna  
Richard Tramp

**Total Attendance: 9 voting RAC Members**

## Agenda

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|------------|--|--|
| 12:30 p.m. | Call to Order and Welcome  | Dennis Phillippi, Chair                              |
|            | Quorum Determination   | Mary Erickson, DFO<br>Karen Tuscano, RAC Coordinator |
| 12:40 p.m. | Current Status (2 yr. re-authorization)  | Lin Goettlich<br>Mary Erickson                       |
|            | <b>Lin Goettlich reported that the Secure Rural Schools Authority has not been renewed by Congress, and is not sure when, or if, it will be renewed.</b>   |  |
| 12:45 p.m. | Review of protocol, rules and ranking  | Dennis Phillippi, Chair                              |
|            | Prep for Group Breakouts   |  |
|            | Review Funding Estimates and Spreadsheet   | Lin Goettlich  |
|            | Review of Project Proposals (Q/A, clarify)   | Karen Tuscano  |
|            | <b>Moose Creek Flats Clarification - Amount</b>  |  |
|            | <b>Karen Tuscano clarified the Moose Creek Flats Project amount that is reflected on the spreadsheets. The original amount that was submitted with the project was \$41,300. Kristin Gardner and Wendi Urie contacted Karen in February stating that the amount they are requesting is incorrect. Karen told them it would be OK to submit a corrected Cost Analysis Worksheet. Kristin emailed Karen a new worksheet with the correct amount of \$14,000. The \$14,000 is what is on all spreadsheets the RAC members currently have.</b> |  |
| 12:50 p.m. | Review Project Proposals   |  |
| 12:55 p.m. | Project Submitter Presentations  | ALL – open to public (sign – up)                     |

### **Project Submission Presentations limit to 5 minutes per project**

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|-------------|--|
| 1:30 – 1:35 | Kristin Gardner – Gallatin River Task Force            |
| 1:35 – 1:40 | Lucas Cain – Gallatin Valley Land Trust                |
| 1:40 – 1:45 | Jennifer Mohler – Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee      |
| 1:45 – 1:55 | Chris Nessel – Montana Conservation Corps (2 projects) |
| 1:55 – 2:05 | Wendi Urie – Bozeman Ranger District (2 projects)      |
| 2:05 – 2:10 | Geoffrey Godfrey – Bozeman Ranger District             |
| 2:10 – 2:15 | James Norlander – Hebgen Lake Ranger District          |
| 2:15 – 2:20 | Joe Josephson – Friends of Hyalite                     |
| 2:20 – 2:30 | Additional presenters not previously signed up         |

- Others not listed – first come – first serve (SIGN UP BACK OF ROOM)

Quick Summary from Presentations (This section started earlier than anticipated, so the order of presenters on the original agenda was not followed):

- **Wendi Urie – USFS, Bozeman Ranger District** – Corbly Gulch project will realign the Corbly Gulch trail and put it on grade with the slope. The trail is a popular trail for forest visitors. The current user-made trail does not drain properly, thus allowing sediment to run down into the watershed. This project would partner with MCC, who has also applied for a RAC grant for their costs on this project.
- **Patrick Reck and Nate Fusselman –USFS, Hebgen Ranger District** – The Buck-Cinnamon Trail is in need of heavy maintenance, such as new water bars, realignment of trail on steep slopes, turnpike construction, install new signs, and work on switchbacks. The trail has seen an increase in the number of users with the increase of visitors to the Big Sky area. This project will partner with MCC, who also has an application for a RAC grant for their costs. Big Sky volunteer groups will also be helping with this project. Asking for \$12,000, of which approximately \$10,000 will go toward FS salary and approximately \$2,000 will go toward signs and other materials.
- **Chris Nasset – Montana Conservation Corps (MCC)**
  - **Buck-Cinnamon Trail** – MCC works with youth to teach them conservation, work ethic, and basic job skills through work on the ground with various groups. This project would allow MCC youth to work with the Hebgen Lake Ranger District trails crew improve this trail.
  - **Corbly Gulch Trail** – This grant would allow MCC youth to work with the Bozeman Ranger District trails crew to improve this trail. The MCC is able to increase capacity on large projects that the ranger districts would not be able to complete with more workers.
- **Geoffrey Godfrey – USFS, Bozeman Ranger District** – This grant would allow the installation of 2 new stoves in 2 rental cabins on the district. One change to the grant is that it would not be in Window Rock Cabin, since a new stove will go in that cabin this week. The grant would cover stoves and maintenance in Spanish Creek Cabin and Little Bear Cabin. Both cabins get 300+ users each year. The stoves that will be installed are Quadrafire Stoves.
- **Joe Josephson – Friends of Hyalite** – This grant would pay for snow plowing on the Hyalite Road. Friends of Hyalite partner with the Forest Service and other groups to provide information and maintain the area. Joe explained the fundraising the group does throughout the year. He also mentioned that one of their biggest fundraisers is the ice climbing event that is held in the canyon, and would not happen without the road being plowed. In a 2012 site survey, 19,000 people were recorded using that area per week.
- **Kristin Gardner– Gallatin River Task Force** – This project will address safety issues and improve pathways to the river on FS administered Moose Creek Flat Campground. They have all of the necessary permits in hand. They have raised \$95,000 for the project so far.
- **Jennifer Mohler – Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee** – This project will pay for mapping weeds in the Gallatin River canyon and near Big Sky. The committee works with private landowners. They have previously mapped infestations in the canyon, and the new construction has them worried that more weeds will be spread if they aren't identified early. They have some money for the project, but some matching funds would be helpful. They share the information with many groups including the GYCC, MDT, Northwestern Energy, and USFS. They also provide free services to private landowners. The group routinely works with Gallatin County weed managers.
- **Lucas Cain – Gallatin Valley Land Trust** – Lucas explained that the Trail Ambassador program is in its 4<sup>th</sup> season. Trail ambassadors have been working in the most popular trail areas and have had thousands of interactions with trail users. This program involves education for the users, and is not enforcement. They are looking to expand their services and the number of ambassadors with this grant.
- **Wendi Urie – USFS, Bozeman Ranger District** – The Gallatin County Cooperative Resource Protection project would pay for overtime for Gallatin County Sheriff's Department personnel to patrol and respond to incidents in high use areas on the Forest Service administered lands. It would provide a law enforcement presence that the Forest Service does not have capacity for.

1:30 p.m.	Unfinished business ranking process	Dennis Phillippi-Group Breakouts,
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2:00 p.m.	Voting process	Dennis Phillippi
	<b>Priority Ranking of ALL recommended projects</b>	Karen Tuscano

Each Category presented to the group the amount of funding they wanted to go toward each project. Two projects originally received \$0 from 2 of the 3 categories. Those projects were discussed amongst the entire RAC, and the members decided to not fund those 2 projects. They were the Trail Ambassadors project and the Resource Protection Cooperative project. The 2 projects that originally received \$0 from one category were discussed next. Those projects were the Weed Inventory project and the Moose Creek Flats project. Those 2 projects received funding at a lower amount than requested. The three categories then discussed the funding that they wanted to go toward the remaining projects.

Kerry White moved to fund the projects as reflected on the project funding spreadsheet.  
John McKenna seconded that motion.  
Motion passed with none opposed.

The RAC members then ranked the priority projects that would receive more funding, if more funding became available.

John McKenna made a motion to rank the MCC Corbly Gulch project as highest priority, followed by Buck-Cinnamon Heavy Trail Maintenance project.  
Bruce Reirson seconded that motion.  
Motion passed with none opposed.

3:10 p.m.

Review of prior projects

Lin Goettlich  
Karen Tuscano

Spreadsheets handed out showing what types of projects and money awarded in prior years.

3:15 p.m.

Discussion on possible merge of RAC's

Mary Erickson

Mary explained that there are currently 2 RAC's that the Custer Gallatin NF supports. There have been some informal discussions about possibly merging those RAC's into one RAC that would then serve 5 counties. This has been discussed because it has been difficult to get enough members for a quorum for meetings, and facilitating 2 RAC's is time consuming for the Forest Service employees. No decision has been made, and no conversations with the county commissioners have happened yet. Feedback from the RAC members was that they like knowing where the projects take place, and they feel they wouldn't have that if the RAC's merged. Travel was also a concern. Mary will wait to see if the Act gets reauthorized and then have more conversations with involved parties at that time.

3:30 p.m.

Close-out

Dennis Phillippi

John McKenna made a motion to adjourn the meeting.  
Richard Tramp seconded that motion.  
Motion passed with Kerry White opposing.